

Editorial

Change of Journal Name: Journal of Clinical Forensic Medicine becomes the Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine

The *Journal of Clinical Forensic Medicine* was established in 1994 as the official Journal of the UK-based Association of Police Surgeons, and was a successor to *The Police Surgeon*. The Journal was originally co-published with Churchill Livingstone – now part of Elsevier. In the ensuing years the journal has developed further affiliations to include the Australian College of Legal Medicine and the British Association of Forensic Medicine. In 2003, the Association of Police Surgeons changed its name to the Association of Forensic Physicians (AFP) to better reflect the independence from the police and the broader role of its membership.

The aim of the Association has been to promote the (officially unrecognised) medical specialty of Clinical Forensic Medicine. Over the last 10–15 years it became increasingly clear that there was a need to separate the Association's representative and educational functions by establishing an appropriately recognised professional and academic institution. In 2000, AFP Council agreed to actively pursue the concept of forming a medical college or faculty – a decision ratified at a subsequent annual general meeting. In 2004, an approach was made to the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) in London, UK, to investigate the possibility of forming a faculty of the College. Simultaneously, and serendipitously, other medical practitioners within the UK medical system with predominantly medicolegal workloads (medicolegal advisers of the three UK medical defence organisations and medically qualified coroners) also approached the College with a similar request. The Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians has duly been established to incorporate these three disciplines and is the first new Faculty within the RCP for over two decades.

The Faculty, which held its first meeting in April 2006, has been founded to achieve the following objectives:

- to promote for the public benefit the advancement of education and knowledge in the field of Forensic and Legal Medicine.
- to develop and maintain for the public benefit the good practice of Forensic and Legal Medicine by ensuring the highest professional standards of competence and ethical integrity.
- to act as an authoritative body for the purpose of consultation in matters of educational or public interest concerning Forensic and Legal Medicine.

At the 2006 Annual General Meeting of the AFP, it was resolved to dissolve the Association of Forensic Physicians and transfer its assets to the Faculty. The *Journal of Clinical Forensic Medicine* is jointly owned by the AFP and Elsevier and shortly the Association's 50% share will be transferred to the Faculty and the Association will be formally wound down.

The change of ownership and the creation of the new Faculty makes it timely to change the title of the Journal to better reflect its affiliations, scope and content. The *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine* will continue to publish a broad range of content to reflect the readership which includes forensic medicine (clinical and pathological) and allied sciences, legal medicine, medical law and all matters pertaining to these specialties as defined in the Journal aims and scope. The new title will not change any retrospective publication titles or details, nor will it affect any representation in citation indices although in the future it will be the new name that is used in all correspondence and publications. It is our intention that this changeover be simple and seamless, but if issues do arise, the editor, production team and the author and reviewer support groups will be happy to be contacted personally.

An adequate evidence base must underpin all medical specialties – and forensic and legal medicine is no exception.

The *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine* will play an important role in cementing that evidence base by providing a forum for the rapid publication of topical articles and original research from all branches of the specialty.

Dr Ian F Wall
President, Association of Forensic Physicians

Dr Guy A Norfolk
President, Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine

Dr J Jason Payne-James
Vice-President (Forensic Medicine)
Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine, Editor-in-Chief,
JCFM/JFLM